

109TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. RES. 393

Designating March 8, 2006, as “International Women’s Day”.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MARCH 8, 2006

Mr. BIDEN submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the
Committee on the Judiciary

RESOLUTION

Designating March 8, 2006, as “International Women’s
Day”.

Whereas all over the world women are contributing to the growth of economies, participating in the fields of diplomacy and politics, and improving the quality of the lives of their families, communities, and nations;

Whereas discrimination continues to deny women full political and economic equality and is often the basis for violations of basic human rights against women;

Whereas the health and life of women and girls worldwide continues to be endangered by violence that is directed at them simply because they are women;

Whereas worldwide violence against women includes rape, genital mutilation, sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, honor killings, human trafficking, dowry-re-

lated violence, female infanticide, sex selection abortion, forced pregnancy, forced sterilization, and forced abortion;

Whereas at least 1 in 3 females worldwide has been beaten or sexually abused in her lifetime;

Whereas 1 in 4 women in the United States has been raped or physically assaulted by an intimate partner at some point in her life;

Whereas 20 percent to 50 percent of women worldwide experience some degree of domestic violence during marriage;

Whereas, on average, 3 women are murdered by their husbands or boyfriends in the United States every day;

Whereas it is estimated that 1 in 5 adolescent girls in the United States becomes a victim of physical or sexual abuse, or both, in a dating relationship;

Whereas an estimated 135,000,000 women and girls of the world have undergone genital mutilation, and 2,000,000 girls are at risk of mutilation each year;

Whereas worldwide, women account for $\frac{1}{2}$ of all cases of the human immunodeficiency virus and acquired immune deficiency syndrome (referred to in this preamble as “HIV/AIDS”);

Whereas young women in Africa are 3 times more likely to contract HIV/AIDS than men;

Whereas worldwide sexual violence, including marital rape, has been cited as a major cause of the rapid spread of HIV/AIDS among women;

Whereas between 75 percent and 80 percent of the 27,000,000 refugees and internally displaced persons of the world are women and children;

Whereas illegal trafficking for forced labor, domestic servitude, or sexual exploitation victimizes 2,000,000 to 4,000,000 women and girls throughout the world each year;

Whereas $\frac{2}{3}$ of the nearly 1,000,000,000 illiterate individuals of the world are women;

Whereas $\frac{2}{3}$ of children worldwide who are denied primary education are girls;

Whereas throughout the world, girls are less likely to complete school than boys;

Whereas that educational failure has real consequences for the global economy and the security of the United States, and especially for the millions of girls with limitless potential who continue to lose the chance to discover their worth and importance as global citizens;

Whereas girls who are educated are more likely to enjoy healthy and stable families, lower mortality rates, higher nutrition levels, delayed sexual activity, less chance of contracting HIV/AIDS, and less chance of having unwanted pregnancies;

Whereas it is estimated that women and girls make up more than 70 percent of the poorest people in the world;

Whereas in most nations, women work approximately twice the amount of unpaid time that men do;

Whereas women work $\frac{2}{3}$ of the working hours of the world, and produce $\frac{1}{2}$ of the food in the world, yet earn only 10 percent of the income in the world, and own less than 1 percent of the property in the world;

Whereas rural women produce more than 55 percent of all food grown in developing countries;

Whereas women worldwide still earn less, own less property, and have less access to education, employment, and health care than do men;

Whereas there are 82,500,000 mothers of all ages in the United States;

Whereas approximately 3 in 10 United States households are maintained by women with no husband present;

Whereas women comprise almost 15 percent of the active duty, reserve, and guard units of the Armed Forces;

Whereas it is not enough to say women deserve a voice in politics;

Whereas nations should take steps to ensure the full participation and representation of women in their conferences and committees, plenaries, and parliaments;

Whereas social investment, particularly investments in women and girls, should be an integral part of foreign policy;

Whereas the dedication and success of those working all over the world to end violence against women and girls and fighting for equality should be recognized;

Whereas special recognition is owed to 10 women fighting to make a difference in their communities and around the globe, including the following: Brigadier General Sheila R. Baxter, Commander, Madigan Army Medical Center, Western Regional Medical Command; Sheryl Cates, Executive Director of the National Domestic Violence Hotline and the Texas Council on Family Violence; Lora Jo Foo, Civil rights, labor activist, and Managing Attorney at the Asian Law Caucus; Salma Hayek, Actress and Domestic Violence Advocate; Asma Jehangir, Pakistani human rights activist, author, and lawyer; Liz Lerman, Founder and leader of the Liz Lerman Dance Exchange; Wangari

Maathai, Nobel Peace Prize-winning environmentalist and founder of the Green Belt Movement; Kavita N. Ramdas, President and Chief Executive Officer of Global Women's Fund; Bernice Johnson Reagon, singer, scholar, activist, and founder of Sweet Honey in the Rock; and Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, newly-elected President of Liberia;

Whereas March 8 became known as "International Women's Day" during the last century, and is a day on which people, often divided by ethnicity, language, culture, and income, come together to celebrate a common struggle for equality, justice, and peace for women; and

Whereas the people of the United States should be encouraged to participate in "International Women's Day":
Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2 (1) designates March 8, 2006, as "International
3 Women's Day";

4 (2) reaffirms the commitment of the Senate
5 to—

6 (A) improve access to quality health care;

7 (B) end and prevent violence against
8 women, including the trafficking of women and
9 girls worldwide, and ensure that the criminals
10 who engage in those activities are brought to
11 justice;

12 (C) end discrimination and increase par-
13 ticipation of women in decision-making posi-
14 tions in the government and private sectors;

1 (D) extend full economic opportunities to
2 women, including access to microfinance and
3 microenterprise; and

4 (E) strengthen the role of women as
5 agents of peace, because women are among the
6 best emissaries when it comes to easing reli-
7 gious, racial, and ethnic tensions, crossing cul-
8 tural divides, and reducing violence in areas of
9 war and conflict; and

10 (3) encourages the people of the United States
11 to observe “International Women’s Day” with ap-
12 propriate programs and activities.

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